

Message Text

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ACTION SY-07

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FM AMEMBASSY BEIRUT

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 1171

S E C R E T BEIRUT 3146

FROM RSS BEIRUT

E. O. 11652: XGDS-3, DECLAS: UNDETERMINED

TAGS: ASEC, PINS

SUBJECT: EAT PLYMOUTH, BEIRUT

REF: STATE 047408

1. KUWAIT AND TUNIS SEEM MOST LIKELY LOCATIONS FOR ASSIGNING SUBJECT VEHICLE BASED ON AVAILABLE INFORMATION. TUNIS APPEARS MOST PLAUSIBLE CANDIDATE AT THIS TIME. NEED FOR VEHICLE PROBABLY AT LEAST AS GREAT AT KUWAIT AND SHIPPING IT THERE SIMPLER AND MORE SECURE. HOWEVER, NO INDICATION KUWAIT WOULD USE IT FOR INTENDED PURPOSE. (SEE BEIRUT 3116 QUERYING KUWAIT ON ITS INTENT RE ARMED ESCORT FOR AMBASSADOR.) AT PRESENT NEITHER TUNIS OR KUWAIT HAS AN ARMORED VEHICLE.

2. SITUATION IN TUNIS SEEMS TO WARRANT INCREASED STRINGENT PROTECTIVE MEASURES. REVIEW OF TUNIS TELS REFLECTS (A) ALUMINUM ARMORING OF AMBASSADOR' S VEHICLE SCHEDULED; (B) POST HAS QUERIED ON AVAILABILITY OF A FULLY ARMORED CAR; (C) BODYGUARD ESCORT BEING FURNISHED BY HOST GOVERNMENT; AND (D) POST HAS REQUESTED A FOLLOW CAR FROM GOT WITH PLAINCLOTHES POLICE. GOT HAS NOT ACCEDED TO LATTER REQUEST AND POST IS NOT HOPEFUL IN THIS REGARD. USE OF MSGS ON AD HOC BASIS HAS BEEN PROPOSED BY POST. EAT CAR APPEARS IDEAL FOR THIS PURPOSE, WHETHER MSGS OR LOCAL POLICE UTILIZED. ALSO, IT WOULD PROVIDE AMBASSADOR WITH AN ALTERNATE MEANS OF ARMORED TRANSPORTATION.

3. MAC REPRESENTATIVE BEIRUT ADVISES U. S. MILITARY AIRCRAFT COULD FLY VEHICLE TO NAPLES FROM WHERE IT COULD PRESUMABLY BE SHIPPED

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WITHIN REASONABLE TIME TO TUNIS. COST ON SCHEDULED FLIGHT ABOUT \$300. NEXT SCHEDULED MAC FLIGHT BEIRUT IS MARCH 27; CAR COULD BE IN NAPLES VIA ADANA, TURKEY, ON MARCH 28. COST OF SCHEDULING SPECIAL MAC FLIGHT IS REPORTEDLY \$1,000 PER HOUR FLIGHT TIME. INQUIRIES CONCERNING SHIPPING CAR BY WATER FROM BEIRUT TO TUNIS IN PROGRESS. YOU WILL BE FURTHER ADVISED ON RECEIPT OF THIS INFO.

4. MAC FLIGHT COULD ALSO BE USED TO FLY CAR TO WITHIN DRIVING DISTANCE OF KUWAIT. AS NOTED, NEXT SCHEDULED MAC FLIGHT TO ADANA IS MARCH 27 AND SHIPMENT FROM ADANA TO DHAHRAN, SAUDI ARABIA, WOULD PROBABLY TAKE A MINIMUM OF A WEEK FOR A SCHEDULED MAC FLIGHT. CAR CAN BE DRIVEN BY EMBASSY OR CG CHAUFFEUR FROM DHAHRAN TO KUWAIT.

5. BASED ON REVIEW OF TELEGRAMS, KUWAIT IS TAKING EXTENSIVE PROTECTIVE MEASURES IN ALL REGARDS EXCEPT CONCERNING VEHICULAR MOVEMENTS OF AMBASSADOR. RSS BELIEVES SUCH PROTECTIVE MEASURES SHOULD ALSO BE TAKEN AS INTEGRAL PART OF IMPROVING POSTS SECURITY POSTURE.

6. PREFER HOLDING DECISION ON SHIPPING CAR IN ABEYANCE PENDING FURTHER WORD FROM KUWAIT ON ITS INTENTION OF PROVIDING PROTECTION OF AMBASSADOR DURING VEHICULAR MOVEMENTS.

7. IT SHOULD BE NOTED THAT SUBJECT VEHICLE HAS A TWO- WAY RADIO INSTALLED, I. E. AN MT-76 OPERATING AT 162.125 AND 162.1750. FURTHERMORE, RSO BEIRUT HAS UTILIZED VEHICLE TO LARGE EXTENT SINCE DEC 20, 1972, ROCKET ATTACK ON EMBASSY. ON NUMBER OF OCCASIONS HE HAS USED IT FOR PROTECTIVE SECURITY PURPOSES, I. E. WHEN RSO ROCHE HAS PERSONALLY PROVIDED ADDITIONAL " BODYGUARD" PROTECTION FOR AMBASSADOR. SINCE KHARTOUM AFFAIR, SUBJECT VEHICLE USED FOR AMBASSADOR'S MOVEMENT TO EVENING SOCIAL FUNCTIONS AS LEAD CAR OR AS AN ADDITIONAL FOLLOW CAR OCCUPIED BY RSO AND/ OR POLICE BODYGUARDS. ANTICIPATE CONTINUATION OF SUCH USE IF VEHICLE REMAINS IN BEIRUT. HOWEVER, AMBASSADOR FEELS AND RSS CONCURS THAT SUCH USAGE DOES NOT WARRANT ASSIGNING IT TO THE POST. BEIRUT HAS ONE FULLY ARMORED CAR, ONE FOLLOW CAR SIMILAR TO EAT VEHICLE AND DCM'S OFFICIAL CAR IS SCHEDULED FOR ARMORING.
BUFFUM

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